

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TOKYO 08569 01 OF 02 120955Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12
EB-08 DLOS-09 /092 W
-----080314 121003Z /10

O 120941Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7864
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 08569

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, US, JA
SUBJECT: FUKUDA STOCK UP AT LEAST BRIEFLY

SUMMARY: WASHINGTON SUMMIT WAS POLITICAL PLUS FOR FUKUDA,
AND HE IS MAKING SKILLFUL POLITICAL USE OF MOMENTUM
GAINED, ALTHOUGH IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER IT CAN BE SUS-
TAINED TO AFFECT POLITICAL CRUNCH LATER IN YEAR. END
SUMMARY.

1. AS A RESULT OF HIS WASHINGTON VISIT, FUKUDA'S IMAGE
HAS RECEIVED A DISTINCT BOOST. HIS VISIT DOMINATED THE
NEWS FOR NEARLY A WEEK AND PROJECTED HIM AS VIGOROUS,
PURPOSEFUL, AND BEST ABLE CURRENTLY TO PUT JAPAN'S CASE
TO BY FAR AND AWAY ITS MOST IMPORTANT ALLY. FUKUDA'S
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TOKYO 08569 01 OF 02 120955Z

BUOYANT MOOD AND IMPROVED SELF-CONFIDENCE CAME THROUGH
CLEARLY IN MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE TRIP AND HAS BEEN
APPARENT SINCE HIS RETURN TO TOKYO.

2. USING MOMENTUM PROVIDED BY HIS WASHINGTON TALKS,
FUKUDA HINTED BROADLY TO THE PRESS IN HONOLULU MAY 7 THAT
HE MIGHT CALL A GENERAL ELECTION THIS FALL. THAT GAMBIT

HAS SET OFF A FLURRY OF DEFIANT RESOLUTIONS WITHIN CONSERVATIVE RANKS AND GNAWING ANXIETY AMONG OPPOSITION PARTIES. ALTHOUGH FUKUDA HAS SINCE SAID HE IS NOT THINKING OF DIET DISSOLUTION, HIS HONOLULU STATEMENT CLEARLY ACHIEVED ITS DESIRED DOMESTIC POLITICAL EFFECT.

3. FUKUDA'S WASHINGTON VISIT IMAGE BOOST AND ITS DOMESTIC POLITICAL USEFULNESS ARE ALMOST CERTAIN TO BE FLEETING, HOWEVER. DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS HE FACES A SERIES OF IMPORTANT POLITICAL TESTS, WHICH MAY WELL DETERMINE WHETHER HE WILL STAY ON BEYOND DECEMBER WHEN HIS CURRENT TERM AS LDP PRESIDENT -- AND PRIME MINISTER -- ENDS. THESE ARE:

-- A LEGISLATIVE BATTLE BEGINNING NEXT WEEK OVER DIET EXTENSION, COMPLICATED BY SHARP POLITICAL DIFFERENCES OVER THE PENDING SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY (PFT) AND JAPAN-ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION;

-- THE RESCHEDULED MAY 20 OPENING OF NARITA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT;

-- THE JULY BONNECONOMIC SUMMIT WHICH WILL AGAIN EXPOSE FUKUDA TO POSSIBLE FOREIGN CRITICISM.

4. AN EXTRAORDINARY DIET SESSION TO CONSIDER A SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET AND POSSIBLY PFT TREATY IS WIDELY EXPECTED IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 08569 01 OF 02 120955Z

SEPTEMBER. IT WILL BE MUCH CLEARER WITH THE MAJOR POLITICAL TESTS BEHIND WHETHER FUKUDA'S CRITICS WILL HAVE THE UPPER HAND BECAUSE OF HIS "FAILURE TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING," OR HE WILL HAVE THE STRENGTH TO FORCE A DIET DISSOLUTION. OBSERVERS WILL, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE BEEN ASSIDUOUSLY KEEPING SCORE ON HIS PROGRESS IN MEETING THE GOVERNMENT'S MAJOR ECONOMIC GOALS. OUR GUESS IS THAT THE RESULTS WILL BE MIXED.

5. ON THE ONE HAND, THERE WILL BE INSUFFICIENT BASIS FOR SUSTAINED CRITICISM LIKELY TO FORCE FUKUDA OUT OF OFFICE IN DECEMBER AS HIS OPPONENTS HOPE. ON THE OTHER HAND, HOWEVER, THERE WILL BE NO OBVIOUS JUSTIFICATION FOR SEEKING A POPULAR MANDATE, NOR WILL CONDITIONS BE DECISIVELY FAVORABLE. IN THIS EVENT, FUKUDA MAY WELL BE DEPRIVED OF HIS LAST CHANCE TO GUARANTEE HIS DECEMBER REELECTION AS LDP PRESIDENT BY WAGING A SUCCESSFUL GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN. DESPITE THIS, FUKUDA WOULD STILL PROBABLY HAVE A REASONABLE CHANCE OF CONTINUING IN OFFICE BEYOND DECEMBER FOR, SAY, ANOTHER SIX TO TWELVE MONTHS. (THERE ARE NUMEROUS REPORTS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT A FUKUDA-OHIRA AGREEMENT TO A DELAYED BUT PEACEFUL TRANSITION IS IN THE MAKING.) AMONG FUKUDA'S

ADVANTAGES ARE HIS ABILITY TO GET ALONG WELL EVEN WITH HIS RIVALS, OHIRA'S SEEMING UNWILLINGNESS TO FORCE THE PACE OF CONFRONTATION, AND THE RELUCTANCE OF ALL POTENTIAL RIVALS IN THE LDP AS WELL AS OPPONENTS IN OTHER PARTIES TO TAKE ON FUKUDA'S SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA.

6. THUS, FOR THE TIME BEING, FUKUDA IS USING HIS WASHINGTON IMAGE BOOST AND DRISOLUTION HINTS TO MUTE CRITICISM AND KEEP HIS OWN AND OPPOSITION PARTIES IN LINE. THIS CURRENT POSITION OF RELATIVE STRENGTH WILL HOWEVER, BE

REINFORCED OR DISSIPATED BY OTHER POLITICAL EVENTS ON THE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TOKYO 08569 02 OF 02 120956Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12
EB-08 DLOS-09 /092 W

-----080319 121002Z /10

O 120941Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO \$SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7865

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 TOKYO 08569

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

IMMEDIATE HORIZON. WHILE FUKUDA APPEARS TO BE MAKING THE MOST OF HIS WASHINGTON IMPETUS, HE IS ALMOST CERTAINLY UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT ITS DURABILITY. MANSFIELD

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TOKYO08569
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780201-1121
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780562/aaaacaml.tel
Line Count: 164
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2e22969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2701041
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FUKUDA STOCK UP AT LEAST BRIEFLY SUMMARY: WASHINGTON SUMMIT WAS POLITICAL PLUS FOR FUKUDA, AND HE IS MAKING SKILLFUL POLITICAL USE OF MOMENTU
TAGS: PINT, US, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2e22969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014